



Media Release

Ontario's Major Urban Electricity Utilities Joining Forces To Help Consumers Lower Their Electricity Costs

Electricity Conservation Programs To Be Delivered Under Brand Name "powerWISE™"

April 1, 2005 --- Six of Ontario's largest local electricity distribution companies (LDCs) will work cooperatively under the name "powerWISE" to deliver a major, multi-year, initiative designed to promote energy conservation to consumers and reduce the demand for electricity in their respective service areas.

Enersource Hydro Mississauga, Hamilton Utilities Corporation, Hydro Ottawa Limited, PowerStream Inc., Toronto Hydro-Electric Systems Limited and Veridian Connections will invest a combined \$70 million over the next three years on conservation and electricity demand management programs. In total, the six utilities represent 1.65 million customers or approximately 40 percent of the electricity customers in Ontario.

"The cost of electricity is going up and the goal of this cooperative effort is to provide consumers with the information and the tools they need so they can reduce their electricity use on a sustainable basis and keep their hydro bills affordable," said Art Leitch, President and CEO of Hamilton Utilities Corporation, which developed and is currently using the "powerWISE" trademark to promote conservation in its service area.

Consumer-oriented conservation initiatives under "powerWISE" may include promotion of energy efficient lighting and appliances, residential energy audit services, access to online services such as energy consumption calculators, and school education programs. A "powerWISE" website has already been developed at www.powerwise.ca.

"In addition to promoting the financial and environmental benefits of conservation to individual consumers under the name "powerWISE", we also plan to work cooperatively on the delivery of programs and services that will lower overall demand for electricity in our individual service areas, particularly during peak periods. This includes new metering technologies, load control systems, energy audits for large industrial and commercial customers, and upgrading power lines to lower electricity losses," said Anthony Haines, Chief Operating Officer, Hydro Ottawa.

In addition to agreeing to work together on conservation initiatives under "powerWISE", the six utilities are taking a cooperative approach to smart meters. They have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to develop a business case, as well as the financial and legal options, for the delivery of smart meter services on a provincial scale.

Smart meters measure how much electricity customers use each hour of the day. Customers would pay a higher price for the electricity they use during periods of high demand, such as during the day and lower prices for periods of low demand, such as at night, on holidays and weekends. The goal is to raise awareness about the cost of power and to encourage customers to reduce their electricity use during times when the price is high. The provincial government wants all Ontario customers to have a smart meter by December 31, 2010.

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